

# FARM FAMILY LIVING IN 1948

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## How Many People Live on Farms?

The farm population for the United States reached a peak of 32.5 million in 1916. In January, 1945, our farm population was at its lowest point with 25.2 million people. The number of people now on farms is 27.6 million. The return of men from the armed services and the high birth rate account for the recent increase. This same population trend has taken place in Ohio.

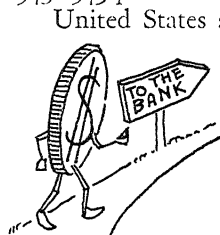
## How Does the Farm Family Income Look?

Farm family incomes were about 20 per cent higher in 1947 than in 1946. The outlook is for continued high incomes in 1948.

## Are Farm Families Saving As Well As Spending?

About 68 per cent of the farm families saved in 1946. Currency in the hands of farm families January, 1947, was nearly four times the amount for January, 1940.

Bank deposits of farm people rose to their highest point in 1946. The amount and rate of the rise was considerably less than that in the 1943-1945 period.



United States savings bonds were held in January, 1946, by about half of the farm operator families. Three-fourths of these bonds were held by 10 per cent of the families. About half as much was spent by farm families in 1946 for savings bonds as in 1945. The amount of bonds cashed by farm families in 1946 is estimated to have been about half of the amount bought during the year.

Less of the farm family income went to pay off debts in 1946 than before. The first increase in farm real estate debt since 1927 was reported in 1946.

## How Does the Farm Family Spend Its Money?

Nearly all families of farm operators in the United States had a better living in 1946 than in 1940. More farm homes had electricity, phones, and automobiles. In spite of the fact that the dollars bought less in 1946, farm products sold at prices high enough to more than offset this situation.

The amount spent for living by a group of Ohio farm families in 1940 was \$892. In 1945 the average amount spent was \$1,295; in 1946 it was \$1,516.

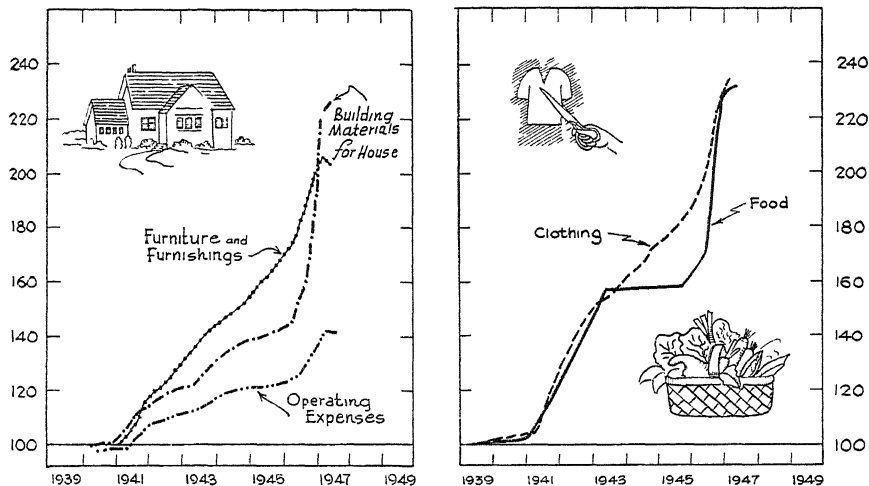
Spending for household equipment and furnishings was much higher than in previous years. More was spent for medical care. Food still takes the "lion's share" of family dollars.

With high prices still in prospect and with farm families wanting to buy many things, spending for living will likely be greater in 1948 than in 1947. High on the list of things the farm family wants are materials and labor for improving homes, more household equipment, and automobiles.

### What About Prices of Things the Family Buys?

Prices paid by farm families for things they buy are now 13 per cent higher than a year ago. Whether or not this trend will continue through 1948 is a guess.

Prices Paid by Farm Families



Some of the things that will work toward keeping prices up or even make them go higher are:

1. Large demands for food.
2. Shortage of materials in industry and shortage of finished supplies reaching the retail market.
3. The fact that many people want and need things which are still scarce.
4. Willingness of people to spend income and savings.
5. Free use of credit or "buying on time."
6. Export demand for food, fuel, machinery and equipment.

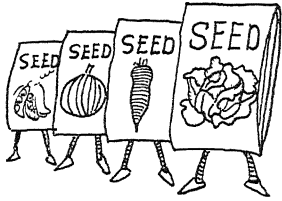
Some things which could work against higher prices are:

1. Refusal of families to buy at higher prices.
2. More supplies of some goods on the market.

### What Is the Food Supply Picture?

Secretary Anderson says "The people of America now face a history-making test. All of us are being asked to cut down on our use of grains

and grain products, and of meat in order that millions of men, women, and children in war-scarred Europe may be spared outright starvation this winter. We are asked to conserve on the use of these foods voluntarily, immediately, and all together as a unified team."



The average person in the United States is eating about one sixth more food today than he did in the four-year period before the war. Europeans are eating one fourth less. It is estimated that one slice out of every loaf of bread baked every day in the United States goes into the garbage. This is enough bread to feed a

million people in war-torn countries for half a year.

The Ohio Nutrition Committee asks that all Ohio families use foods that are plentiful and make "wasteless eating" the style. If every man, woman, and child in Ohio would replace two slices of bread with one serving of oatmeal each week, this would mean 12,700 bushels of wheat every week for the hungry peoples of Europe. One small serving of potatoes can replace a slice of bread.

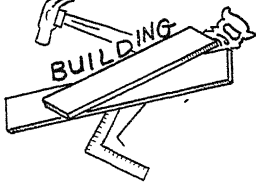
Farm families can make a contribution toward helping those in need by producing more of the foods they eat and by using all foods carefully. Some families may feel that because food is produced on their own farms it is unnecessary to economize in its use. Wise planning by farm families will mean they can have a well balanced diet and have more food to sell on the market.

Families who use food they produce themselves have better diets than those who buy. Records show that the farm price value of home produced foods used by a group of Ohio farm families averaged \$381 in 1946. Had this food been bought, the family food bill would have been about \$1,126 instead of \$364 which was spent. Now is the time to start planning for the 1948 garden.

Prices paid by farm families in June, 1947, for food were one-third higher than prices in June, 1946. It now looks as if high prices of food will continue for some time.

### Are There Materials for Improving Houses?

Supplies of some building materials were better in 1947 than in 1946. Among these were warm air furnaces, water heaters, hardwood flooring, clay sewer pipe, asphalt roofing materials, cement, clay tile and brick. The present outlook for gypsum products is bright.



Supplies remain tight in many housing lines. Still scarce are millwork, nails, flooring, iron soil pipe, electrical supplies, and sheet steel for use in warm air furnaces, downspouts, and gutters. In general it might be said that in 1948 it will likely be a question of "when" you will get a material rather than "whether" you will get it. This indicates that families may benefit by waiting. Now is the time to *plan* re-

modeling rather than to get the job done. Prices of building materials will continue high in 1948.

### **What Is the Supply of Furnishings and Equipment?**

There were more washing machines, ranges, and refrigerators sold in 1947 than in 1946. Many families, however, still want more household equipment than the market can furnish. Steel for use in such appliances will likely be scarce for the next year or so.

Smaller appliances, such as irons, toasters and vacuum cleaners, are plentiful.

The supply of furniture has not caught up with the wants of families. Some low-priced lines have been discontinued. Prices of household equipment and furniture will likely stay up for several months.

Those who intend to buy furniture will do well to keep in mind the trend toward smaller houses and consider the amount of space required for any purchase.

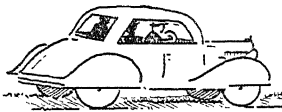
### **What Is the Clothing News?**

There are indications that some families are resisting high clothing prices. In spite of this, price increases seem to be in the picture for several months ahead. Present indications are that prices for shoes will go up.

Apparently women are finding they save more money by sewing for themselves than for their children. During the last few years, there has been a great increase in the number of patterns sold for women's clothing.

There is danger that women, especially the younger ones, will be led by present style changes into accumulating a larger wardrobe than is necessary. This is unwise, since fashion changes have not been accepted generally and the manufacturer himself is not yet certain which styles will be continued for another year.

### **Can the Family Have a Car?**



It may be 1950 or later before it will be possible to buy a new popular model car without waiting.

Registration of cars of all kinds is at the highest level in history. Tire supplies for passenger cars are good. Prices of new and used cars have risen in 1947 and prices of new cars are expected to continue high.

### **Do Health Services Need Attention?**

Home accidents accounted for approximately 23 per cent of the 490 accidental deaths of Ohio farm people in 1946. More than half of these accidents were caused by falls and nearly one-third by burns.

Records show that rural areas are sadly lacking in hospital facilities. Figures from the State Department of Health tell us that 19 per cent of the Ohio cities and 47 per cent of the Ohio counties make no provisions for assuring safe and pure milk supply. Sixty-three per cent of the Ohio Health Districts have no sanitary requirements for public eating places.

These facts indicate that families should investigate the possibilities of improving health conditions in their local communities and in the state.